

RUSSIAN RIVER SECTION 7 CONSULTATION - IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME

DESCRIPTION:

- The consultation will facilitate ESA compliance for operation of water supply and flood control facilities and will lead to improved in-stream and riparian habitat for listed salmonids
- Outcome will help provide a secure water supply for approximately 800,000 people in Mendocino, Sonoma and Marin counties
- Consultation considers three listed salmonid species (steelhead, coho salmon and Chinook salmon)
- A Biological Assessment (BA) is being developed to assemble available information and evaluate the potential effects of facilities and operations on listed salmonids
- Using the BA, National Marine Fisheries Service will prepare a Biological Opinion (BO) evaluating the project that will direct how the USACE, SCWA, Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District, and City of Ukiah facilities may be operated
- Implementing the requirements of the BO is anticipated to require changes in infrastructure and operation of flood control, hatcheries, hydroelectric, water supply and diversion facilities, channel maintenance practices, restoration and conservation actions, as well as estuary management
- Alternatives contemplated in the Section 7 to address the effects on fisheries include: changes in flow regime; changes in channel maintenance practices and flood control operations; physical and operational modifications to the water supply

PROJECT GOAL

Implement operational strategies for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sonoma County Water Agency and Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District activities that ensure water supply, and accommodate flood control, hydropower generation, fish hatchery operation and estuary management, while being protective of listed salmonids and their critical habitat.

system; and the consideration of a water transmission pipeline down Dry Creek

PARTNERSHIPS:

- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region
- City of Ukiah
- Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- Sonoma County Water Agency
- State Water Resources Control Board
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The Russian River Section 7 Consultation was initiated in December 1997, when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Marine Fisheries Service and the Sonoma County Water Agency entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for developing the consultation.



Don Clausen Fish Hatchery at Lake Sonoma



Sonoma County Water Agency Mirabel infiltration ponds and water diversion facilities along the Russian River

The biological opinion developed by National Marine Fisheries Service as part of the Russian River Section 7 Consultation is anticipated to provide direction for conducting activities to minimize adverse effects to listed salmonids and critical habitat. The biological opinion will provide a source of valuable guidance for similar Agency and County activities both inside and outside the Russian River watershed.

Outcome of the Section 7 Consultation is anticipated to result in the need to construct new or modify existing facilities appurtenant to water supply and diversion, flood control, hatcheries, and hydroelectric power generation, as well as implementing new methods to manage flow-related habitat conditions, maintain channel capacity and operate the estuary.



Aerial view of Warm Springs Dam and Lake Sonoma